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- ART. III. — 1. *Œuvres Complètes du ALEXANDRE DUMAS. Théâtre.* Paris: Charpentier et Passard. 1834 – 1846. 10 vols. 8vo.
2. *Œuvres Complètes du ALEXANDRE DUMAS. Romans.* Paris: Michel Lévy et frères. 1846. 19 vols. Small 8vo.
3. ALEXANDRE DUMAS *dévoilé par le Marquis de la Pailletterie, Marchand de Lignes pour la France et l'Exportation, Commissionnaire Français en Espagne et en Afrique, Tueur des Lions, Protecteur d'Abd-el-Kader, Sauveur des Sauvés, Plaqué de l'Ordre de Charles III, Pendu du Nischam, Chevalier d'une Légion d'Honneurs et d'une Foule d'autres Pailletteries.* Paris: À la Librairie du Passage du Grand-Cerf. 1847. 18mo. pp. 36.
4. *Les Supercheries Littéraires Dévoilées. Galerie des Auteurs apocryphes, supposés, déguisés, Plagiaires, et des Éditeurs infidèles de la Littérature Française pendant les quatre derniers Siècles: ensemble les industriels Littéraires et les Lettrés qui se sont anoblis à notre Époque.* Par M. J. M. QUÉRARD. Paris: L'Editeur, Rue Mazarine, 60 et 62. 1847. 4 vols. 8vo.

THE learned Menckenius, in his elaborate treatise *De Charlataneria Eruditorum*, relates a curious anecdote of a certain Johannes Segerus, poet laureate and rector at Wittenberg in the seventeenth century. This dignitary had adorned his mansion with a large painting of the crucifixion of our Saviour, in which he himself was represented as standing at the foot of the cross with the following words written on a label issuing from his mouth: “*Domine Jesu, amas me?*” To this laconic address, the image of our Lord was forced to reply in like manner and in the following strain: “*Clarissime, pereximie, nec non doctissime, Domine Mag. Segere, Poeta Laureate Cæsaræe et Scholæ Vitebergensis Rector dignissime, Ego amo te!*”

Menckenius, starting from the proposition, *Muntus fuld tezibi*, as it is expressed in the mongrel Latin of his country,—that the world desires to be deceived, and doats upon being humbugged,—is highly entertained at the ridiculous

self-complacency of Master Johannes, and at the sneers which this display of his self-conceit served to excite among the learned of his own day. Had our author, however, survived until this present time, we fear much that he would have found matter for serious repentance in the charges he has thus insinuated against the rector of Wittenberg; for, judging him by the standard of literary modesty that now seems to prevail in the capital of the polite world, we must perforce look upon him as a person of the most delicate sensitiveness, the most retiring and exquisite diffidence. For what shall we say of a man, who, in the space of about twenty years, had given to the public no less than one hundred and thirty separate works, a large proportion, if not the majority, of which he knew to be not of his own composition, and yet, so far from finding any cause for mortification or reproach in the discovery and proclamation of this fact, positively claims it as an additional merit, as another point in which the efforts of his Muse are assimilated to those of Shakespeare, Corneille, and Moliere? Nor is this the most singular part of the story; (for we can readily understand, that, after all, any thing may be looked for from the *cacoethes scribendi* of an author, and above all, of a French author;) but that so large a body of readers and admirers should not only remain his supporters, but become his partisans, and this too in the teeth of the most convincing and irrefragable evidence of his plagiarisms, is to us almost incomprehensible. A respectable man, in the columns of a responsible journal, at a period when no rank in society was secure from the assaults of the press, when no detail, either of public or private life, was exempted from the rude hand of hostile and scurrilous investigation, undertook to assert that a certain successful author, whom he named, had been guilty of copying, or borrowing, or transcribing (or any other term you please), without the least credit or acknowledgment, passages from such and such pages of such and such volumes of such and such books. One would have supposed the matter a very simple one to examine. The charges were specific; the evidence easy of investigation. A reference to the volumes cited, to the pages named, would have sufficed in a moment to cover the accuser with ignominy

and shame, or at least to establish the veracity of his testimony, whatever opinion might be entertained of its weight and relevancy. This course, however, was not pursued by the admirers of our author, although it seems to have met with his own encouragement. The position which he had already attained by his tact and his talents became even more exalted by the re-echoed voices of clamorous praise that hailed each successive production that appeared under the sanction of his name. He was elevated to a rank unheard of among his contemporaries. Moliere and Corneille at home, Göthe and Schiller in Germany, Shakespeare himself, were called on to receive into their divine companionship a bard whose fame, if not eclipsing, should outshine them all.

We cannot concede to this overweening aspirant a seat upon high Olympus; we cannot even place him among the demigods of literature; and with the convictions we entertain of his actual merits and of the means by which he has attained his present elevation, as well as of the extreme absurdity and dangerous tendency of the taste that has thus far caused his books to be received by so numerous a public as perfect masterpieces of genius, we deem it our bounden duty to lay before our readers some account of the history of the literary productions of M. Alexandre Dumas.

Quérard, in the work whose title is placed at the head of this article, has with great skill and ingenuity collected a very valuable and important dictionary of the chief literary frauds and impostures that have appeared in France during the past four centuries; and it is from his article upon M. Dumas that we shall glean much of the contents of this paper. The theme, though limited entirely to French literature, is a curious and an interesting one, and it is much to be regretted that no similar work of corresponding value exists in our own language. The science of bibliography, in this country almost unknown, is even in England comparatively neglected. The era of Watts and of Lowndes and of the immortal Dibdin seems to have passed away; and though we see afar off in the distant skies the radiant streaks of dawn presaging a speedy and a glorious morrow, yet the watchers are but few. Not so in Paris, where, if no more is known, certainly a vast

deal more is said and written of bibliography, than across the Channel. Nowhere else perhaps in the whole world, and in fact hardly there, could it have been possible to find a man able and willing to prepare a series of four large octavo volumes, not to tell what books men wrote, but what books they did not write; not to give a complete list of the works of a famous author, but to point out which of the number he bought, which he borrowed, which he stole, and to indicate the cost of his bargains and the sources of his plunder. We will not pause to recapitulate the advantageous consequences of such labors. By glancing for a moment at the history of literary imposture, our readers will discern for themselves of what vast importance it is to the cause of truth and of learning that every ass in a lion's skin, every wolf in sheep's clothing, that enters into the arena of letters, should be speedily and thoroughly stripped of his meretricious pretensions, reduced to his proper and just level, and, if need be, soundly cudgelled for his impertinent or treacherous disguise.

It would be impossible to point out the date of the first forged volume; according to Bentley, the custom is as old as that of writing originals. The first book, then, must have been an original composition; the second, we presume, must have been a plagiarism.* Let it be so, for aught we care;

* "Among the Romans, whoever stole a child was liable by law to get a sound flogging; and as *plaga* in Latin means a *stripe*, or *lash*, kidnappers in Cicero's time were called *plagiarii*, or *cat-o'-nine-tail villains*. . . . The term *plagiarist* has since been applied metaphorically to literary shoplifters and book-robbers, who stuff their pages with other men's goods, and thrive on indiscriminate pillage. This is justly considered a high misdemeanor in the republic of letters, and the lash of criticism is unsparingly dealt on pickpockets of this description. Among the Latins, Martial is the only classic author by whom the term *plagiarius* is used in the metaphorical sense, as applied to literature; but surely it was not because the practice only began in his time that the word had not been used even in the Augustan age of Rome. Be that as it may, we first find the term in Martial's Epigrams (Lib. I. Epigr. 53). Talking of his verses, he says,

'Dicas esse meos, manque missos :
Hoc si terque quaterque clamitâris,
Impones *plagiario* pudorem.'

Cicero himself was accused by the Greeks of pilfering whole passages for his philosophical works from the scrolls of Athens, and cooking up the fragments and broken meat of Greek orations to feed the hungry barbarians of the Roman Forum. My

let Ælian and Fabricius, Perrault, Heyne, and Wolf, rest quietly in their graves, disturbing the world no more by their outcries against the Homeric origin of the Iliad and the Odyssey. Whether Suidas or Plutarch be right, whether Xenophon or Themistogenes be the author of the Anabasis, is a question interesting enough in another place, but not to be dwelt upon here. But we must be pardoned for stepping out of our way for a moment to register our indignation against one man of letters,—*homo trium literarum*, he might with more justice be termed,—whose vanity and mendacity have ravished from the jewelled sceptre of the Muse one of its brightest gems. There is a custom among certain tribes for every passer-by to cast a stone upon the grave of a murderer; so do we pause to add an additional execration to the already lofty cairn that stigmatizes the memory of Petrus Alcyonius. This man, the friend and fellow-laborer of Aldus Manutius, had been intrusted by a convent at Padua with the control of its library, which was known to contain, among other treasures, a manuscript treatise, *De Gloria*, by no less a hand than Cicero; being the book referred to in his letter to Atticus (Lib. XV. Ep. 27). Bernardo Giustiniani, Governor of Padua, on his death-bed bequeathed this precious tractate, with the remainder of his library, to these silly nuns, as if it were possible that all that Cicero, or Solomon to boot, had written of glory, vanity, “and such like branches of learning,” should be a matter of any concern to their austere and self-abnegating desires. In the plenitude of their wisdom, they admitted Alcyonius to exercise full control over books

authority is that excellent critic St. Jerome, who, in the ‘Proœmium in qu. Heb. Lib. Genesis,’ distinctly says, ‘Cicero repetundarum accusatur a Græcis,’ &c., &c.; and in the same passage he adds, that Virgil, being accused of taking whole passages from Homer, gloried in the theft, exclaiming, ‘Think ye it nothing to wrest his club from Hercules?’ (*Ibidem.*) *Vide Sancti Hieronymi Opera*, Tom. IV. fol. 90. But what shall we say when we find Jerome accusing another *holy father* of plagiarism? Verily the temptation must have been very great to have shaken the probity of St. Ambrose, when he pillaged his learned brother in the faith, Origen of Alexandria, by wholesale. ‘Nuper Sanctus Ambrosius Hexameron illius compilavit.’ (*Sancti Hieronymi Opera*, Tom. III. fol. 87, in *Epistolâ ad Pammach.*) It is well known that Menander and Aristophanes were mercilessly pillaged by Terence and Plautus; and the Latin freebooters thought nothing of stopping the *Thespian wagon* on the high-ways of Parnassus.” — FATHER PROUT.

that in all human probability they valued but slightly; and this scamp had the audacity, believing (and with but too much justice) that there was no other copy of Cicero's manuscript in existence, to incorporate as much thereof as he dared into a production of his own, entitled *De Exilio*, and then to destroy all tangible evidences of his guilt by burning the original. Such an impudent piece of roguery as this could not, however, escape detection. Struck with the irregularity of style and thought that the essay exhibited upon its face, Paulus Manutius and Paulus Jovius set on foot a research into the sources whence Alcyonius had drawn his inspiration; and the whole tale at length leaked out. Tiraboschi has ingeniously enough undertaken the defence of this sacrilegious priest of Apollo's shrine, but, in our opinion, in vain. He has richly merited to hang in chains as a warning to all succeeding times; for if such be the murderer's doom who takes away that which no human power can replace, why should it be withheld from the reputation of him who robs the world of that which a thousand years may not see equalled, will never see restored?

On some more suitable occasion, we should like to present to our readers a few of the most curious and interesting forgeries and frauds that have checkered the pages of English literature. For the present, however, we shall confine ourselves chiefly to an exploration of the French field, so widely opened to us by M. Quérard. The value of this gentleman's services can be fairly estimated only by a glance at the ground he has gone over, and by observing how many works, professedly the production of a certain author or a certain age, are revealed by him as belonging altogether to another. Whether the aim of the imposture be merely to mystify and puzzle the world, or, more culpable, to deceive it, may authorize a discrimination in our treatment of the impostor, but cannot affect the propriety and necessity of his detection. The apocryphal Gospels, the forged decretals of various Popes, the hypothetical treatises so long falsely attributed to St. Ambrose, to St. Athanasius, to St. Augustin, to St. Bernard, to St. Ignatius, and to so many other Fathers of the Church, which have for the most part been sifted out and

exposed only in late years, abundantly prove how serious and worthy an employment it may be, to sit in judgment upon the genuineness of a book. The frauds to which we have just alluded were in their origin most respectable, in their consequences most troublesome. Almost without exception, the forged portions were fabricated by some ecclesiastic, whether an obscure monk or a lordly bishop. Doubtless, in many cases, the artist, after completing his essay or homily, thought it no harm to place beneath it the name of any holy Father whose authority might serve to give greater weight to the promulgation of truths which the writer firmly believed he must have held. But, at all events, the thing was done, and done constantly and profusely, till we find even the acute Erasmus complaining that he possesses not a single volume of the Fathers, the text of which has not been falsified. Such works are not uncommon in our own days.

The *Floretus S. Bernardi* (Argent., A. D. 1478, in octavo, and Davent., 1499, in quarto) is a case in point. It purports to contain the main particulars of the canons and theology of that teacher; but, alas! poor Bernard was dead and gone centuries before its real father, Johannes de Garlandia, ever saw the light.* So of the eleven books of St. Athanasius concerning the Trinity (Basil., 1528), edited by Sichard. They are now generally attributed, we believe, to the African Vigilius, Bishop of Thapsus. A more impudent trick was that of Tichonius, who, having, in furtherance of his own theological notions, prepared a commentary upon the Epistles of St. Paul, had the effrontery to publish them (Colon., 1532) under the name of St. Ambrose. This same person has also favored the world with some compositions of St. Augustine, which need not be referred to here.

Nor were the prophets and holy men of old the sole victims of the fraudulent skill of later times. In the sixteenth century it seems to have been considered as a regular and laudable amusement to circulate forged fragments of the classics. It will be remembered that printing was as yet but in its infancy; that all the masterpieces of ancient and of more recent

* *Hist. Litt. de la France*, by the Benedictines, Vol. VIII. p. 91.

days, the Odes of Horace, the *Æneid* of Virgil, the *Iliad* of Homer, and the Sonnets of Petrarch, were still in manuscript at or about the period of which we write. Scholars all over the land were busied in collating and comparing together different readings of the same piece, and in preparing it for the press. Libraries in every quarter were ransacked; old volumes of manuscripts tumbled about; palimpsests renovated, revived, and deciphered, in the search after the hidden treasures they might conceal; in short, every nerve was strained to meet the constantly increasing facility of printing by an unceasing supply of fresh and adequate material. This greedy appetite was often the cause of no little confusion to the too confiding editors, whose credulity led them to accept for genuine relics of antiquity such fraudulent imitations as the love of practical jokes might induce less grave and sober students to palm off upon them. Joseph Scaliger, for instance, would never forgive a quondam associate, one Muret, for having sent to him, as remains of two ancient Latin comic authors, some very tolerable verses of his own composition, which Scaliger, in all good faith and seriousness, published in his edition of Varro, as fragments of Attius and of Trabeas, two poets whose names are as genuine as their verses. To trifle on such a subject was nothing less than sacrilege in Scaliger's eyes: he was apprised of the trick, and from that time forth he subscribed himself his contributor's enemy. A less flagrant outrage upon the reputation of the dead and the self-love of the living, was the publication at Venice, in 1583, for the first time, of a very famous work, Cicero's book upon Consolation, in which he himself is consoled for his daughter's death. This beautiful piece is doubtless well known to many of our readers, for it is not an uncommon thing to find it incorporated entire in the works of Tully; and the learned Tiraboschi himself would probably never have perceived the fraud, had he not discovered at Modena, about the year 1783, papers which revealed the whole transaction. It seems that there existed, in the sixteenth century, mere fragments of the tract upon Consolation, which being discovered by Charles Sigonius of Modena, — one of the most profound and accomplished scholars of that or any other age, — he reconstructed

upon their base the essay as it at present stands, of which it is sufficient praise to say, that it is well worthy of being acknowledged, by Cicero himself, as not the least among his works. The curious who wish to pursue this subject still further will find in the criticisms of Voltaire and of Charles Nodier ample reference to the unsuccessful attempt of François Nodot, who, in 1693, vainly invited the Parisian world to believe that his edition of the *Satyricon* of Petronius Arbiter was the transcript of an original manuscript that he had discovered at Belgrade. Another enterprising Gaul, Monsieur Fumée de Génillé, had a century before given to the press a *soi-disant* translation from the Greek of Athenagoras, upon True and Perfect Love. The gentle Huet, Bishop of Avranches, was content, while believing the book to be a forgery, to credit the existence of an original Greek text; but we must now-a-days coincide with Barbier, who declares that, insomuch as no one has ever seen or heard of the manuscript in Greek, we must conclude that the forgery was committed in its present form, and that the work was originally written, as it now appears, in French.

In 1738, a forged edition of Catullus, from a pretended manuscript, was published at Venice, in folio. The author was a poet of the time, of some local reputation, named Corradino. At first the deceit was not unsuccessful, and some currency was given to it by the edition of Catullus, Tibullus, and Propertius, published nominally at Leyden, but really at Paris, by Coustelier, under the supervision of Nicolai Leuglet Dufresnoy, in 1743, which adopted as genuine the text of Corradino. But he and his verses have now alike passed away.

Our own days furnish us with numerous instances of more dexterous frauds than these stupid bungles of the last century. One of the most amusing of these literary humbugs of a later date was that published under a feigned title and name, by the Spaniard Marchena, about the year 1808, as some newly discovered fragments of Petronius. It seems, that, to beguile the tedious hours of a winter's cantonment at Bâle, Marchena and some of his friends had amused themselves with literary pursuits, and had prepared five notes upon erotic subjects, which they desired to publish appended to the

text of some classic author. Marchena, not readily finding an author to his mind, modestly set to work to compose a text for himself, and, in fine, so ingeniously imitated the style and matter of Petronius, that everybody was beguiled, and it was with difficulty that the declaration of the real composer as to its authorship was credited. Encouraged by this brilliant success, Marchena essayed a new adventure ; and under his own name, as editor, he published a fragment of Catullus, which he pretended to have derived from the newly unrolled papyri of Herculaneum. But this time he was soundly drubbed with his own weapons. Eichstädt, a professor at Jena, published a little volume, in which he asserted that in the library of that town was a very ancient manuscript containing word for word the identical passages given by Marchena : only, under pretence of correcting several clerical oversights of the Spaniard's copyist, Eichstädt so artfully, and with such ironical gravity, pointed out error after error in prosody, that no one could mistake the satirical nature of his piece. To cap the climax, however, he added a copy of verses which left no room for doubt as to his perfect appreciation of the Herculaneum scroll.

One of the most skilful of the literary Pucks of our own day, whose only aim seems to be the harmless and mirthful one of mystifying and deluding for a brief season those astute and well-informed critics who constitute, so to speak, *la haute police de la republique des lettres*, is M. Nicolas Chatelain of Rolle, in Switzerland, who has on more than one occasion so artfully parodied the style, language, sentiments, and all the minuter turns of thought and expression, of Madame de Sévigné, Voltaire, etc., that several publications of his in the names of these persons, though not designed permanently to deceive anybody, were supposed to be genuine and authentic by more than one competent critic.

So late as 1837, Maizony de Lauréal presented to the public a French translation of a poem by the Roman Florus, upon the destruction of Herculaneum ; but, unfortunately, he has hitherto omitted to produce the Latin original, and consequently the general opinion is that the whole affair is a hoax. A similar objection may be urged against the Letters of Clau-

dus Rutilius Numatianus, a Latin writer of the fifth century, of which a translation was published by M. Bégin of Metz, in 1844. M. Bégin alleged that the original manuscript was in Spain, where he had discovered it, and where he had transcribed his copy. He thus obviated the dangerous necessity of producing it to be tested by the curious critics of his own country. But instead of giving the entire Latin text with his translation, and thus enabling every scholar to judge for himself of its authenticity, he chose to content himself with merely noting that a phrase which he employed,—*la haute société dorée*,—was a literal translation of the words of the text: *alta et aurea societas*. It was asking too much to call upon the public to take any man's unsupported affirmation for sufficient evidence in a question of this nature, and the hypothetical Rutilius has quietly sunk into obscurity.

We believe that it was M. Ernest de Calonne who, in 1844, endeavored to humbug the Parisian public with a more familiar name. "Le Docteur Amoureux," alleged to be an original, unpublished comedy of Molière, but really, it is thought, from the pen of M. de Calonne, was brought out at the Théâtre Français, with a success less suited to its alleged than to its actual origin.

There is another species of literary imposture perhaps peculiar in its successful audacity to the nation whose affairs of this sort have occupied our almost exclusive attention in these pages. This is the preparation of writings from original materials of more or less authenticity, or sometimes from no original materials at all, and then attributing them to some famous courtier or courtesan of the period to which they relate. Among the higher rank of such productions we may cite two of so much intrinsic merit as to have caused their speedy and continued popularity, without regard to their spurious origin. These are, "The Troubadour, or Poems in the Language of Occ of the Thirteenth Century," published in 1803, and composed by Fabre d'Olivet; and "Les Poésies de Clotilde de Surville," composed by Vanderbourg, and published in 1803. The former readers of that excellent periodical, the Retrospective Review, will recollect how much admiration these charming productions excited many years since. But there are

many other works, particularly historical memoirs, that find their place in every library, under names which they have no pretence of right in bearing, to which the student in French literature should be careful to assign their proper value. Such are the "Souvenirs sur Marie-Antoinette et sur la Cour de Versailles, par la Comtesse d'Adhémar" (Paris, four volumes, 8vo, 1836), which are not the composition of a *dame du palais* of the last century, but of a most fertile writer of this, the Baron de Lamothe-Langon, to whom we are in like manner indebted for the putative *Mémoires* of Sophie Arnoult, of the Duchesse de Berri, and doubtless of many others, "too numerous to mention." The chief rival of Lamothe-Langon in fecundity of composition is Maxime de Villemarest, many of whose compilations with other sponsors in baptism are familiar to the public. Such are the *Mémoires* of Mademoiselle Avrillion concerning the Empress Josephine; of Blangini, the famous Italian composer; of Adèle Boury; of De Bourienne, the celebrated minister of state, who, however, had furnished to M. de Villemarest three volumes of notes, upon which the latter proceeded to construct the ten octavos which came into the world as the lawful offspring of M. de Bourienne, and which drew down upon that ex-minister's head the wrath of Gourgaud, of Joseph Bonaparte, of Cambacères, and of so many other imperial dignitaries. The *Mémoires* of the Baron Bergami (the hero of Queen Caroline's trial in the time of George IV.), published at Paris in 1820, were written by Vatout; those of Cagliostro, by Courchamps, or some other equally competent hand, fifty years after that brilliant charlatan had disappeared in a dungeon. The Letters of Clement XIV., and his correspondence with Bertinazzi, are equally suppositious. The History of the Peninsular War by General Foy is another case in point. Perhaps fifty pages of that work may have been written by Foy; the residue is by an entirely different pen. And yet we are daily called upon to admit statements of fact upon the authority of such works as these, solely on the score of the faith to be reposed in the observation and intelligence of their reputed writers. And such, too, is the material of which history is built! Who can expect that the house founded

upon the sand will escape overthrow; or that the course of events can seem consistent with itself, when traced with such uncertain lines? Such works as those of Quérard and Barbier must in emergencies of this nature be our only guides and protectors; but nothing can prevent the reception of false impressions of character, of distorted views of facts, by minds not yet acquainted with the wild masquerades of the Muse of History in France.

The last branch of literary fraud and imposture of which we shall here speak is that comprehended under the general head of pseudonymous works; that is to say, of works written by one person and published under the name of another. Under certain circumstances, this is often done without any risk of hostile censure. Nothing is more allowable than for an author of any description to adopt such a *nom de plume* as may best suit his fancy; but when the matter is carried a little farther, when A writes a book and it is published as B's, the thing wears a more serious aspect; and when an author in the full tide of fame and popularity is discovered to have obtained no inconsiderable portion of his reputation upon the not unnatural belief that he himself was really and truly the writer of certain books that bear his name upon their face, but which, in sober truth, were as little the fruit of his genius as of that of the Khan of Tartary, — then, indeed, we have a right to bring the culprit before the bar of public opinion, to strip him of his “borrowed lendings,” and to restore to their proper owners the gaudy trappings in which he has so long glittered before our eyes.

We beg to state here, once for all, that nothing is farther from our purpose than the idea of depriving M. Dumas of one tittle of the fame to which he is justly entitled, or of abating by a single grain the real merit that he undoubtedly possesses. So far as we may decide, from a general survey of his career, the mind of this author appears to be one of a rather singular description. To a decided tact in picturesque arrangement and grouping, he unites considerable ability and skill as to stage effect. But as regards knowledge of human nature, and power to fathom the deep-sunken wells of passion, or to reveal the hidden springs that govern conduct, he is very

deficient. The instances in his books that may seem to refute this statement will be considered in due season: it is enough to mention here, that, not being the composition of M. Dumas, they in no wise affect our estimate of his genius. As to minuteness of detail, — that fine delicacy of finish which gives to some books the value of a Medicean gem or a goblet of Cellini, — nothing of the kind is to be looked for in his pages. It is foreign alike to his disposition and his manner. In short, were M. Dumas a painter, his talents would find their appropriate sphere upon the stage. A skilful arrangement of “properties,” — a free, dashing representation of rocks and forests, vivid, though perhaps rather unnatural, at a distance, but coarse and unfinished when examined more closely, — such would, we opine, be the highest achievements of his pencil. Nothing like a sea view, a landscape, or an historical piece of superior merit, would be likely to appear from his *atelier*. It is possible that he might produce one of those large panoramas that often betray a degree of talent and artistic skill no less gratifying than unexpected; but it would be in vain to ask of him a cabinet picture.

In preparing this article, we have been not a little struck with the acrimony and malicious zeal displayed by the phalanx of enemies whose envenomed arrows have been at various times discharged against one of the most successful and least deserving of their tribe. The origin of this feeling is probably to be found in the superb self-confidence and vanity of M. Dumas, and in the scornful disdain with which he occasionally responds to his critics. Nothing can surpass the contemptuous indifference with which he alludes to Granier de Cassagnac: he even ignores his existence. And yet that critic has said nothing of our author that does not appear to be perfectly true and within the bounds of fair criticism: he is, moreover, a person of such standing as to give no little weight to his judgment. But be the cause what it may, nothing is more certain than that M. Dumas has provoked a swarm of critics that will allow no *supercherie* of his to escape detection.

Alexandre Davy Dumas was born in Villers-Cotterets in 1803. His father, Alexandre Dumas, a Republican general

in the most brilliant days of the wars of the French Revolution, was a man so devoted to the principles of the party whose cause he had espoused, as to win the appellation of Horatius Cocles from his melodramatic companions in arms. Whence his son derived the title of Marquis de la Pailleterie, that within the last few years he has been wont to assume, we know not: certainly it was not from this ultra-democratic sire. His earlier years were graced with no such distinction. At the period when he first comes before our view, (for with his private life we do not feel that we have any thing to do,) Dumas was filling a secretary's post under Louis Philippe, then Duke of Orleans, with an annual salary of twelve hundred francs. It is he himself who gives us these particulars in his article, "Comment je devins Auteur Dramatique" (*Revue des Deux Mondes*, 2d series, Vol. IV., 1833). At twenty years of age, with no fit training for the great tasks of authorship that the future reserved for him, our youthful hero found himself chained to his desk for eight hours during the day, and from seven until ten o'clock every evening. It was about this time, however, that, in his few moments of leisure, he composed his first publications; the earliest of which was, we believe, an elegy upon General Foy, printed at Paris in 1825. A few other unimportant pieces succeeded it. But his foretaste of triumph was to come from the stage. And in order to procure a correct understanding of the nature and causes of his triumph, it will be necessary to glance for a few moments at the history and condition of the French drama at this period.

On this subject we shall freely draw from De Leoménie's "Galerie des Contemporains Illustres." From 1820 to 1828, he says, the necessity of decided dramatic innovation developed itself more and more plainly. The sceptre of Racine and Corneille, fallen into the hands of the tragedians of the Empire, inspired no greater respect than that of Louis XIV. in the feeble grasp of Louis XVI. It was very evident that the stilted formalities of the ancient stage, irradiated though it had been by the most brilliant minds of their day, must give way to the growing necessities of a new generation. This posture of affairs is likened by our critic to that crisis in the state,

in the year 1789, which preceded the Revolution, and in the persons of MM. Vitet and Mérimée, the one with his "Scènes Historiques," and the other with his "Théâtre de Clara Gazul," he finds the representatives of the moderate or Girondist faction; the Montagnards of the stage, on the contrary, being led by De Vigny, Victor Hugo, and, a little later, by Alexandre Dumas.

The Three Days of July did much to promote the success of the dramatic revolution. Naturally enough, the conservative politicians were generally best pleased with the old-fashioned style. Some of the chief leaders of the invasion—Victor Hugo in particular—were no favorites with the government of Charles X., and were perpetually embroiled with the authorities that controlled the theatres. The barriers which had hitherto, in a measure, restrained the friends of innovation, being at last removed, they found themselves free to enjoy the most stormy and turbulent triumph. A reign of terror, so to speak, was introduced forthwith upon the stage, in lieu of the orderly, decorous arrangement that had before existed, when a single offence against the three unities was sufficient to drive a piece from the boards; when Macbeth with his bloody hands would have raised the wildest uproar; when, in fact, every thing was to be done in words, nothing in deeds. A bloody torrent of murder, assassination, and foul licentiousness forthwith poured across the astonished stage, while the headsmen perched upon his scaffold closed the perspective. With all this, there was a constant series of masquerades and mediæval processions, gleaming with cuirasses, helmets, and gauntlets, coats of mail and heraldic tabards, daggers of Milan and Toledo blades, poisoned goblets and rope-ladders. Now, as accessories to the drama, these are all well enough, but they cannot be suffered to constitute its whole merit. It is not sufficient for the dialogue that it shall be barren of ideas, rich only in oaths. *Fête Dieu ! Sang de Dieu ! Malediction !*—"these be brave words," but they will not make a good play. Yet the audiences of the Parisian theatres for several years after the Revolution of July were of a different opinion. They were perfectly content with the amusement of their eyes alone, with the emotion produced by mere material effects.

Withal, there are often among the best pieces of this period plays of the most passionate enthusiasm, of the most overwhelming energy. The reader is carried along, disapproving the language, revolting at the plot, but enchained by the talent and fire of the author. Such are "Lucrèce Borgia," "Marion de l'Orme," "Ernani," and "Ruy Blas"; such, in a very inferior degree, is "Henri III."

This saturnalian epoch is styled by M. de Leoménie the year 1793 of the drama; when Victor Hugo and Dumas, the leaders of the Mountain, triumphed totally over their antagonists, and were placed by the public upon the thrones of Corneille and Racine. It needs no spirit of prophecy, however, to carry the simile further, and to predict the appearance of a poet who shall, Bonaparte-like, drive before him from their places the authorities already loathed by the people, and restore a purer and more orderly style of theatrical literature.

It was in the earliest portion of the revolution of which we have been speaking, that M. Dumas brought out his first important play, "Henri III. et sa Cour," performed at the Théâtre Français, February 11, 1829; and he has himself told us when and how the divine flame was kindled in his bosom. Long perceiving the utter incompetency of the "legitimate" drama to afford to his generation the satisfaction it had yielded in earlier times, he was accustomed to watch with interest every new symptom of its inevitable downfall, and to lose himself in vague speculations upon the nature of the edifice that should be built upon its ruins. At this juncture, a party of English players, representing the *chefs-d'œuvre* of their own stage, visited Paris. The tragedy of Hamlet was announced; our young secretary was among the spectators. As, according to his own account, it was to this circumstance that we are indebted for the hundreds of volumes that to-day are sold under the name of Alexandre Dumas, we do not know that we can do better than to give in his own language his impressions upon this occasion.

"Supposez un aveugle-né auquel on rend la vue, qui découvre un monde tout entier, dont il n'avait aucune idée; supposez Adam s'éveillant après sa création, et trouvant sous ses pieds la terre émaillée, sur sa tête le ciel flamboyant, autour de lui des arbres à fruits d'or; dans

le lointain, un fleuve, un beau et large fleuve d'argent ; à ses côtés, la femme jeune, chaste et nue, et vous aurez une idée de l'Eden enchanté dont cette représentation m'ouvrit la porte.

"Oh ! c'était donc cela que je cherchais, qui me manquait, qui me devait venir ; c'étaient ces hommes de théâtre, oubliant qu'ils sont sur un théâtre ; c'était cette vie factice, rentrant dans la vie positive, à force d'art ; c'était cette réalité de la parole et des gestes faisant des acteurs, des créatures de Dieu, avec leurs vices, leurs vertus, leurs passions, leurs faiblesses, et non pas des héros guindés, impassibles, déclamateurs et sententieux. — O ! Shakespeare, merci ! — O ! Kemble et Smithson ! merci ; merci à mon Dieu ! merci à mes anges de poésie !"

Previously to this, says M. Dumas, he had composed nothing ; the enthusiasm engendered in his soul by this Shakespearean revelation, bursting forth in his *Henri III.*, was to be the first fruits of his Muse. This is all very romantic and pointed ; but we are forced to believe that he had forgotten himself when he made this assertion, for nothing is better established, than (setting aside writings of other descriptions) that he had already figured as the author of several plays, one of which, "*La Noce et l'Enterrement*," met with considerable success. Much as he was destined to shine in the romantic drama, he had already composed a tragedy in the classic vein, called "*The Gracchi*," and had translated another from Schiller ; both of which, however, he informs us, he burned without suffering them to appear in the light of day.

To *Henri III.* succeeded "*Christine*," which met with almost as singular success ; and in rapid order followed "*Charles VII.*," "*Richard d'Arlington*," "*Antony*," "*Napoleon Bonaparte*," "*Térèse and Angèle*," — all romantic dramas, all produced with a pomp and circumstance almost unparalleled upon the stage, and all welcomed with rapturous plaudits by the audience. Any one of them will serve to give a reader a fair idea of the author's merits ; for M. Dumas possesses many, and more particularly such as are born with a man, and not such as may be acquired by care, taste, and study. He certainly is endowed with a strong, nervous imagination, with great inventive faculty, with a keen perception of contrasts, and, above all, with a disposition and taste for the

production of theatrical effect. Nor is he wanting in a certain comprehension of the workings of the human heart. But he is lamentably deficient in other qualities of no less importance. Style he has none; it would be wonderful if he had. We have his own account of his life and education. We find him a lively, intelligent stripling, filled with animal spirits and the fire of youth, but with a mind uncultivated and uncared for, plunging headlong into the stormy sea of literature, where he has thenceforward had enough to do in buffeting the angry waves and in keeping steadily on his course, without pausing to improve his manner or to polish his style. He has made, in a word, his choice between improvisation and reflection. He is apparently content to win the applause of to-day, by surprising the mind of his auditor, lying in ambush for it, attacking it in a quarter whence it expected nothing, carrying it by storm; but he must be prepared to find that posterity will require something a little more elaborate, a little more consistent with sound reason and with itself. With a facile pen, he has thrown upon the world a series of pretended pictures of human life, in which are figured in glowing tints an endless routine of poniards and of gibbets, of rope-ladders of every length, and of crimes of every color; and in due course of time he must find that they will pall upon the public palate. A more immediate result — the censure of the critic who views with alarm the sheep of his fold blindly following some false guide into dangerous passes or quaggy morasses — he has already encountered. And we are obliged to say, that, so far as courage and obstinacy in defending an untenable post, and in always insisting upon having the last word in a controversy, may go, he has proved himself a match for all of his censors. We shall see that these have not been few, nor have their accusations been trivially worded or lightly sustained.

The first famously successful production of M. Dumas was, as we have said, *Henri III.*; and it is also one of the very few of which he may in great part be called the author. The majority of his works of the better class are not written exclusively, many not at all, by their nominal creator; this is a fact to be dwelt upon hereafter. But *Henri III.* owes no “di-

vided duty." Its plot and its dialogue, such as they are, belong to M. Dumas; its incidents, however, may be traced to other sources; and whether they are the fruit of his own mind, or borrowed without acknowledgment from others, the praise or the blame therefor must fall exclusively at his door.

The framework of this piece is evidently founded upon the chapter in Anquetil relating to the court of Henri III., whence two anecdotes, the one of the Duc de Guise, the other of Montsoreau, being dovetailed together, from their union produce the following simple plot. Saint-Mégrin (a courtier of the time of Henri III.) and the Duchesse de Guise are lovers, but have not as yet avowed their passion. To gratify her dislike of the Duke, Catherine de Médicis procures for his rival an interview with the Duchess in the tower of Ruggieri, her astrologer. Saint-Mégrin embraces the opportunity to declare himself, when suddenly the Duc de Guise approaches, and the Duchess disappears in affright. Unfortunately her kerchief is found by the Duke in the tower; his worst suspicions are aroused; and he intimidates his wife into writing a letter to Saint-Mégrin, giving him a rendezvous in her chamber. The gulled courtier falls into the snare, and is assassinated by the Duke. This is the ingenious plot which brought down such thunders of applause, and earned for Dumas the modest appellation of "the Shakespeare of France"!

Perhaps those critics are not altogether wrong, who, admitting an author's privilege, to spare himself the trouble of invention, of using freely any romantic historical incident that falls in his way, yet protest against his distorting or falsifying it to suit his particular end, still retaining names, dates, and circumstances to a sufficient extent to render it difficult for a tyro to separate the true from the untrue. But whether on this question they are correct or not, there can be no doubt of the propriety of their charging the author of *Henri III.* with paraphrasing the language and sentiments of other writers, provided they sustain their accusations with sufficient proof. How successfully they have done this, a few comparisons must show. We translate the following passages for the edification of our readers.

In "Henri III." (Act I. Sc. 7 and 8), the Duc de Guise gives vent to these reflections:—

"I ought to mistrust Saint-Mégrin: Mayenne thought he had perceived that he was in love with the Duchesse de Guise, and warned me of him by Bassompierre. — Tête Dieu! If I were not very confident of the virtue of my wife, M. de Saint-Mégrin should dearly pay for that suspicion!— What is that?— *Mille damnations!* this handkerchief belongs to the Duchesse de Guise, — she has been here! — Saint-Mégrin! — O Mayenne, Mayenne, you did not then deceive yourself! Saint Paul! that some one would seek for me the same men who assassinated Duguast!"

Now turn to Schiller's "Conspiracy of Fiesco" (Act II. Sc. 5):—

"FIESCO. — I pity you, Calcagno: but do you think I would risk a matter so delicate as conjugal honor, if the virtue of my wife were not a sufficient guaranty? — This handkerchief was upon the sofa. — My wife was here, — the kerchief is still moist," etc.

The Duc de Guise, convinced of his wife's infidelity, seizes her wrist in his steel gauntlet, and forces her to write the fatal note which is to lure her lover to his doom. It is impossible not to recognize in this scene a striking resemblance to a passage in Scott's novel of "The Abbot," where the ruffianly Lord Lindesay, in the eagerness of his passion to extort from the captive Queen of Scots a renunciation of her right to the throne, grasps the frail arm of the prisoner in his iron fingers so closely as to leave the purple marks of his gripe imprinted upon her wrist. The letter once written, however, the Duke sends it to Saint-Mégrin by one of his wife's pages. Here, again, commences a strange similarity to a scene in Schiller's "Don Carlos." The parts we refer to are those in Henri III. (Act IV. Sc. 1) beginning, "This letter and this key are for me, say you? Whence did you receive them?" — and in Don Carlos (Act II. Sc. 4), "A letter for me, — why this key? Who has given you these?" and so on.

We will cite but one more unlucky likeness of expression between our author and one of his predecessors, ere we pass to another title. When the unsuspecting Saint-Mégrin has received the Duchess's letter, and has, according to its tenor,

repaired stealthily at midnight to her chamber, the jealous husband, who is watching for this moment, knocks violently at the door. Then the wretched Duchess, in the vain hope to save the life she has been forced thus to imperil, resolutely passes her arm through the rings of iron that are placed upon the door and the posts on either side for the reception of bars, and by this feeble resistance seeks to prevent the entrance of her husband. This is again taken from "The Abbot," where the Lady of Lochleven, attempting to enter Queen Mary's apartments, is denied entrance by Catherine Seyton.

"'I will not be controlled, young lady,' replied the Lady of Lochleven; 'there is, I wot, no inner bar, and I will enter in your despite.'

"'There is, indeed, no inner bar,' answered Catherine, firmly, 'but there are the staples where that bar should be; and into those staples have I thrust mine arm, like an ancestress of your own, when, better employed than the Douglasses of our days, she thus defended the bed-chamber of her sovereign against murderers. Try your force, then, and see whether a Seyton cannot rival in courage a maiden of the house of Douglas.'"

We need not pursue this analysis; enough has been shown, we think, to warrant the idea that there is a similarity which could not have been the result of fortuitous accident between "Henri III." and the other works we have cited. Let us glance rapidly over the remaining plays of M. Dumas ere touching upon his novels.

"Christine"—or "Stockholm, Fontainebleau, and Rome," as it was at first called—did not meet with the same success as "Henri III.," although like it the action and dialogue contain some of the prettiest bits from Hugo and Schiller, the imitation sometimes being as close as this:—

CHARLES V. (*Ernani*, Act IV.)

"Oui; dusses-tu me dire avec ta voix fatale
De ces choses qui font l'œil sombre et le front pale."

PAULA. (*Christine*, Act I. Sc. 3.)

"Tu m'en veux,—et pourtant c'est ton amour fatale
Qui m'a rendu l'œil sombre et m'a fait le front pale."

And, besides the contributions exacted from these two au-

thors, the reader will find that more than one scene (*vide* Act IV. Sc. 8) is taken bodily from "Love and Honor" by Lope de Vega.

"Napoleon Bonaparte," though bearing the sole name of M. Dumas on the title-page, is in reality almost entirely the composition of Cordellier-Delanoue. As may be guessed from its title, however, it is more of a spectacle-play than any thing else. In a very few months, it was succeeded at the Porte Saint-Martin by "Antony," a piece of much greater pretensions. Emile Souvestre, a novelist who has, by a singular exhibition of good taste and propriety in his stories, risen of late years to an enviable distinction in France, was, if we are to believe M. de Mirecourt, the secret and the chief author of this work. If he is so, he must be also content to bear the brunt of the undeniable plagiarisms from Victor Hugo's "Marion de l'Orme" that it contains. The characters of Antony and of Jacques Didier are evidently formed in the same mould. Nevertheless, the piece had an excellent run, and doubtless fulfilled all the expectations of its nominal sire. "Charles VII.," the plot of which is taken from Chartier, and much of the treatment of it from the "Andromaque" of Racine, was far less popular upon the stage. Still, thanks to the generous springs from which it was fed, this play contains many fine passages. Compare for instance the following lines from the third scene with those from the "Feu du Ciel," which we place in connection with them:—

"Je vois se dérouler sur l'ardente savane
Comme un serpent marbré la longue caravane."

Victor Hugo has it:—

"L'œil au loin suit leur foule,
Qui, sur l'ardente houle,
Ondule et se déroule,
Comme un serpent marbré."

"Térésa," a drama in five acts, by Dumas nominally, but with the secret assistance of Anicet-Bourgeois, was brought out in February, 1832. It is, like the rest, a mere patchwork from various authors. "La Tour de Nesle," a tragedy founded on the history of Margaret of Burgundy, was com-

posed by Gaillardet and Dumas, and we must bear witness that, however historical truth is falsified in the plot, there was no disguisement of the double authorship upon the title-page. The amazing success of this play was perhaps owing in part to the exaggerated immoralities and crimes that were portrayed in the character of the queen. History convicts her of simple adultery; she is here painted as living in incest with her own son. Her husband, Louis le Hùtin, afterwards Louis X. of France, discovering her infidelity, caused her to be assassinated in the twenty-fifth year of her age. This fact alone is convincing as to the charges alleged in "La Tour de Nesle." But we must not blame M. Dumas for these distortions of facts: legal investigations have long since determined the question of the authorship of this drama, and have established that, with the exception of some scenes drawn from Goethe and Lope de Vega, its chief composition belongs to M. Gaillardet. Nevertheless, it is reprinted in the collected and authorized edition of the whole works of Dumas.

We cannot be expected in our present limits to recapitulate the scores of theatrical productions that have appeared under the name of this prolific author. Suffice it to say, that a very large proportion of them are either copied, to a greater or less extent, from other works, and without acknowledgment, or that they are not the unaided compositions of M. Dumas. In either case, there can be but one opinion as to the propriety of his presenting them to the world as his own. We could wish to pause upon such pieces as "Angèle" or "Mademoiselle de Belle-Isle," and to expatiate upon the real merit of a certain style that they display, as well as upon the defects they exhibit. But how shall we apportion our praise or our censure? How shall we know when we are rewarding Dumas for the merits of Anicet-Bourgeois, or blaming him for the errors of the Comte de Walewsky? We know that no inconsiderable part of these pieces was written by these two authors, but we cannot point out what is theirs, what their coadjutor's. One thing only we do know, that the autograph copy of "Mademoiselle de Belle-Isle," sent by Dumas to Queen Christine of Spain, brought for him in return the cordon of the Or-

der of Isabella: so we may be sure that her Most Catholic Majesty had no scruples about the double authorship. It is probable that, if she thought upon the matter at all, she coincided with the views so boldly expressed by her tributary dramatist:—

“It is not any man, but mankind,” says M. Dumas, “that invents. Every one, in his own appointed season, possessing himself of the things known to his fathers, turns them over, places them in some new combination, and thus having added some particles to the sum of human knowledge, is gathered peacefully to his sires. As to the complete, entire creation of any thing, I hold it to be an impossibility. God himself, when he made man, *ne put ou n’osa point l’inventer*: in His own image made He him. This it was that made Shakespeare reply to the reproach of a stupid critic that he had taken more than one scene bodily from some contemporary author, ‘It is a maiden that I have withdrawn from bad company to introduce her into good society!’ This it was that made Molière say, with still more *naïveté*, ‘I seize my own wherever I find it!’ And Shakespeare and Molière were both right: for the man of true genius never steals; *he conquers*. He seizes a province; he annexes it to his own realms; it becomes an intrinsic part of his empire; he peoples it with his subjects, and extends over it his sceptre of gold. I find myself compelled to speak in this manner,” continues the *conqueror* of Schiller and Goethe, of Racine and Victor Hugo, of Lope de Vega and Walter Scott, “because, far from receiving from certain critics that applause which I merit for having pointed out to our public dramatic beauties hitherto unknown, they accuse me of plagiarisms, they point me out as a thief. It is true that I have at least the reflection to console myself with, that my enemies, like those who attacked Shakespeare and Molière, are so obscure, that memory will not preserve their names.”

How vastly obliged must be the shades of the immortal poets of Germany, of Racine and of Scott, that their hitherto unknown beauties have at last found a vindicator, albeit he sports them with as little regard to the original authors, as a royal lady recks of the oysters that gave birth to the pearls which glisten on her bosom! And how wretchedly Jules Janin, Thackeray, and a score of others must feel, at the thought of being known to posterity only as the anonymous assailants of the modern Shakespeare, of the Molière of the nineteenth century! We should like, by the way, to know

whence M. Dumas *conquered* that little anecdote of the bard of Avon.

There is no need of hesitating to express our opinion of the actual ability displayed by M. Alexandre Dumas in his dramatic compositions. As closet plays, their merits are by no means proportionate to their number; as acting pieces, the best of them serve to keep the curiosity in suspense by the employment of the most commonplace means, or to gratify the eye with gorgeous costumes, brilliant processions, well-ordered *tableaux*; but as to holding the mirror up to Nature, or seeking to impress upon the mind of the spectator any of those sublime lessons of courage, honor, and virtue for which we are accustomed to look in poems of that class, we might as well seek for similar teachings at the circus or the opera-house. The mission of the drama is a far nobler one than seems to have been dreamed of in the philosophy of M. Dumas:—

“ To wake the soul by tender strokes of art,
To raise the genius, and to mend the heart,
To make mankind, in conscious virtue bold,
Live o’er each scene, and be what they behold:
For this the Tragic Muse first trod the stage,
Commanding tears to stream through every age.”

But, as we have said before, it is vain to criticize in the dark. Our blows, falling at random upon M. Dumas or upon some one of his coadjutors, are half the time as likely as not to hit the wrong man. It is sufficient for us to know that but a comparatively small part of the plays of Dumas really belong to him. We now proceed to his novels; for it is by these that he is chiefly known in America.

The first of his romances that attained any distinction, and one that will be read with pleasure when all the rest are forgotten, is “*Blanche de Beaulieu*,” a really charming little story, which was printed, with “*Laurette*” and “*Marie*,” two other short tales, under the title of *Nouvelles Contemporaines*, in 1826; the author being at the time but twenty-three years of age. Since then, either under the new title of “*La Rose Rouge*,” or some other, it has been frequently reprinted. But it was not until the popularity of his plays had got his name up all over the town, that Dumas fairly became the novel-writer

that he is. It was not until a fame that might almost be termed notoriety had made the Parisian editors as eager to have his name figuring in their columns as their readers were to swallow all that he had written, that he became a confirmed *feuilletonist*. This word may be briefly explained by mentioning that to most of the journals at Paris it is customary to print supplementary sheets, called *feuilletons*, containing a few chapters of some tale or romance by the most popular writer the editors can procure. Most of the modern French novels — most of our author's, at any rate — were issued in this way. The editor pays liberally for what many of his subscribers find the most entertaining pages of his paper, and the author has the additional advantage of making all he can out of its separate publication when it is completed. "La Salle d'Armes," "Isabel de Bavière," and "Le Capitaine Paul," are three works which Dumas thus wrote in the fresher part of his career as a novelist. If he had any assistants, we know not who they were, and therefore believe these to be all his own. With their flashy, meretricious style, they possess just that sort of merit that had distinguished their brethren upon the boards, — a skilful grouping, and artistic, but coarse, contrasts of light and shade. The last-named of the three is a modest attempt to supply the deficiencies of Fenimore Cooper's tale of "The Pilot." M. Dumas coolly takes up the thread of his brother novelist's story, and wherever he can find room, strings upon it the incidents of his own fiction. In 1839, however, our modern Alexander the Conqueror, *pro more suo dramatico*, gave to the public his "Jacques Ortis," the examination of which has led us into a train of the oddest reflections into which we have ever been betrayed respecting the character and motives of a writer of eminence.

The title-page of this book, by what we cannot but consider a singular inadvertency, contains no other key to its contents than the words, "Jacques Ortis, par Alexandre Dumas." The natural inference is, that it is an essay or novel, or something of the kind, upon the well-known theme of Jacopo Ortis, whose letters were published by Ugo Foscolo in 1802. There had been no less than four separate translations of these Letters into the French tongue, the last of which, by

Gosselin, was published at Paris by Didot, in 1829. "Jacques Ortis" opens with a preface signed Pier-Angelo Fiorentino, which presently enlightens us as to the nature of the pages before us, in proclaiming that it is the great, the admirable Dumas that has done the Italian nation the honor of giving to one of its sons new claims to fame by immortalizing his work in another tongue.

"'There was but one man in France,' continued M. Fiorentino, 'who could understand and translate Ortis: that man was the author of Antony. . . . M. Dumas appreciates with such profound learning the hidden beauties of our most eminent Italian writers, that it was easy to see that this dramatic luminary would conqueringly bear away some of our most famous pieces, and that he would manage his seizure with so much address, that no one could compel him to restitution. The translation of the letters of Jacopo Ortis proves that my predictions were correct. M. Dumas has placed himself upon a level with Foscolo. In all justice, Ortis belongs to him: it is at once a conquest and a heritage.'"

Anglo-Saxon readers would revolt at such gross adulation prefixed to a man's own book; but a glance at the opening pages will convert all Fiorentino's praise into the bitterest irony. Would it be credited that this "seizure, managed with so much address that no one could compel him to restitution,"—this "conquest and heritage" by the only man in France that could read and understand Ortis,—is the most glaring adaptation, conquest, annexation,—any thing, of course, but theft,—from the translation of Gosselin, that any one has ever seen? The charge is easily made; it is as easily substantiated. We print from Quérard citations, side by side, taken from the opening letters of either translation, and we put it to our readers, whether the resemblance between M. Dumas and Molière or Shakespeare, so far as they all are charged in common with appropriating the labors of others, goes any farther than that between the crow and the eagle? The one boldly seizes on his prey and devours it in mid-air: the other, ambitiously swooping at a prize which he lacks power to bear away, remains with his feet entangled in the wool of his intended victim, the inglorious spoil of the herdsman.

Translation of M. Gosselin.

"Des Monts Euganéens,
11 Octobre, 1797.

"Le sacrifice de notre patrie est consommé : tout est perdu ; et la vie, si l'on daigne nous la laisser, ne nous servira plus qu'à déplorer nos malheurs et notre infamie. Mon nom est sur la liste de proscription, je la sais : mais veux-tu donc que, pour me soustraire à mes oppresseurs, je me livre à des traîtres ? Console ma mère : vaincu par ses larmes, je lui ai obéi, et j'ai quitté Venise pour éviter les premières persécutions, qui sont toujours les plus cruelles. Mais à présent, me faudra-t-il encore abandonner cette douce solitude où, sans cesser d'attacher mes regards sur mon malheureux pays, je puis encore espérer quelques jours tranquilles ? Tu me fais frémir, Lorenzo ; quel est le nombre des victimes ? Et nous, hélas ! Nous-mêmes Italiens ! nous trempons nos mains dans le sang de nos compatriotes. Il arrivera de moi ce que le sort en décidera : puisque j'ai désespéré et de ma patrie et de moi-même, j'attendrai avec calme la prison et la mort. Du moins mes dépouilles ne tomberont pas dans des mains étrangères ; mon nom sera pleuré en secret du petit nombre d'hommes vertueux qui partagent nos misères, et mes os reposeront sur la terre de mes ancêtres."

Translation of M. Dumas.

"Des Collines Euganéennes,
ce 17 Octobre, 1797.

"Le sacrifice de notre patrie est consommé ; tout est perdu, et la vie, *si toutefois on nous l'accorde, ne nous restera plus que pour pleurer* nos malheurs et notre infamie. Mon nom est sur la liste des proscriptions, je le sais : mais veux-tu que, *pour fuir qui m'opprime, j'aille me livrer à qui m'a trahi* ? Console ma mère ; vaincu par ses larmes, je lui ai obéi, et j'ai quitté Venise, pour *me soustraire aux* premières persécutions, toujours plus *terribles*. Mais *dois-je* abandonner *aussi cette ancienne* solitude où, sans *perdre de vue* mon malheureux pays, je puis encore espérer quelques jours *de tranquillité* ? Tu me fais *frissonner*, Lorenzo ; *combien y a-t-il donc de malheureux* ? Et, *insensés que nous sommes*, c'est dans le sang *des Italiens* que nous, Italiens, *lavons ainsi* nos mains. *Pour moi, arrive que pourra ;* puisque j'ai désespéré de ma patrie et de moi-même, j'attends *tranquillement* la prison et la mort. *Mon corps* du moins *ne tombera pas entre des bras étrangers*. Mon nom sera *murmuré* par le *peu* d'hommes *de bien, compagnons de* notre infortune, et mes os reposeront sur la terre de mes ancêtres."

That we may not deprive M. Dumas of any honor to which he is entitled, we have been careful to put in italics every

phrase in the foregoing extract which differs from the language of M. Gosselin; and we freely tender our compliments upon the success of the conquests therein made, not only of foreign, but of native authors. "No pent-up Utica contracts his powers." He levies with equal freedom upon the wealth of his own countrymen and upon that of strangers, and the ingenuity too with which an arm is substituted for a hand, a body for its bones, merits our special applause.

"The Adventures of John Davy" (Paris, 1840, four volumes, octavo) is a novel of considerable interest, bearing a strong resemblance to the sea-tales of Captain Marryatt, from which many of the ideas are doubtless drawn. "Le Maître d'Armes" (three volumes, octavo), "Le Capitaine Pamphile" (two volumes, octavo), and three other novels, all published in the same year of 1840, do not possess sufficient importance for our prolonged notice. "La Chasse au Chastre," a very entertaining romance, though bearing the name of A. Dumas upon its front, does not at all belong to him, and is not included in the collected edition of his works. It had been already published under the name of its legitimate author, M. Méry, when it was issued as the work of M. Dumas. If there is any reliance to be placed upon the assertions of Eugene de Mircourt (*Fabrique de Romans, Maison Alexandre Dumas et Compagnie*, Paris, 1845, p. 46), there was very tricky conduct somewhere in this business; but we are not disposed to draw conclusions where we are not possessed of all the facts. After a few other novels, of no particular value, appeared "Le Capitaine Aréna" (Paris, two volumes, octavo, 1842), which was paraphrased by M. Dumas from "Terence le Tailleur"; "Albine" (two volumes octavo, 1843), professedly an original novel, but in reality a mere translation; and the "Chevalier d'Harmenthal" (Paris, four volumes, octavo, 1843), which was furnished to M. Dumas by the same gentleman who has written so many other works published under his name,—M. Auguste Maquet. There existed between Maquet and Dumas the closest intimacy; according to their own story, they were mutually bound to submit every thing written by either to the inspection of the other. But as the name of the former alone would not procure from the booksellers any thing like the

price which the most grotesque absurdity of the latter commanded, it was customary for the one to publish as his own the compositions of the other, and while the profits were divided according to a standard of their own, all the fame of the task remained with the one who had done nothing to merit it.

“The page slew the boar :
The peer had the gloire.”

M. Maquet was not the only one who dealt with M. Dumas in the sale of manuscript novels. “Georges” (Paris, three volumes, octavo, 1843), was in like manner the handiwork of M. Mallefille. It is one of the cleverest things that has ever been claimed as his own by M. Dumas. After six more octavo volumes of novels, we come next to “Sylvandire” (Paris, three volumes, octavo, 1844), written, like the “Chevalier d’Harmen-thal,” by Maquet; and then we arrive at the work which has undoubtedly made the fame of its purchaser in this country, and widely extended it over Europe, — the celebrated novel of “Les Trois Mousquetaires.” To say that the chief incidents of this tale are taken from the Memoirs of M. d’Artagnan, written by Sandraz de Courtilz, and published at Cologne (Rouen) by P. Marteau in 1701–2, in three volumes, will not at all detract from the merits of the work. Charles de Batz de Castelmoré, Comte d’Artagnan, — the ancestor, if we mistake not, of the Baron de Batz to whose zeal in the cause of Louis XVI. we alluded in our last number, — was a man whose life, from his departure from Bearn to the moment of his elevation at court to the high position of Captain of the Mousquetaires and favorite of Cardinal Mazarin, affords the happiest *materiel* for a romance-writer to work upon. Nevertheless, we fancy that our readers would be surprised to learn how little the invention was tasked to furnish some of the most interesting details in “Les Trois Mousquetaires.” The amours, — the duels of D’Artagnan with the three friends Athos, Perthos, and Aramis, — this precise nomenclature even, — are all to be found in the Memoirs to which we have referred. The author of the preface to the novel, it is true, points out, to those who desire to see a graphic picture of the times of Mazarin, the *Mémoires d’Artagnan*, but he does it

in a light, careless way, as though it were merely incidental to the more elaborate reference he makes to a certain manuscript volume of *Memoirs of the Count de la Fère*, naming even the particular shelf of the library in which it is to be found. The success of this effort to mislead his readers was so perfect, that the editor of the "*Bibliographie de France*" announced it as the publication of an ancient manuscript. Is it necessary to add, that no such *Memoirs of the Count de la Fère* ever existed?

"*Les Trois Mousquetaires*" was printed in eight volumes, octavo (Paris, 1844): "*Twenty Years After*," its sequel (Paris, 1845), filled no less than ten volumes of the same size. Both works were written by M. Auguste Maquet. "*Le Viscount de Bragelonne*," in six volumes, octavo, has since come out, a sequel to the sequel, and whether it is to be the ultimate, the penultimate, or the antepenultimate of the series, Heaven only knows. The posterity of that adopted babe may yet survive to figure in another twenty-four-volume series.

Variety is said to constitute the spice of life. Lest his readers should grow weary of too great a similarity in the endless string of entertainments that he offered them for seven francs a volume, M. Dumas wisely kept up a constant alternation of writers. "*The Chateau of Eppstein*," which succeeded his immortal *Mousquetaires*, we dare say, he wrote himself. "*Amaury*" (Paris, 1844, four volumes, octavo) he procured to be written by Paul Meurice. There is an amusing anecdote related of the history of this *conquest*, which we cannot refrain from presenting to our readers. Meurice, oblivious of the probability that his composition would never be read over by Dumas, but transmitted by him intact to the *feuilletons* of "*La Presse*," ventured on inserting a tremendous puff of the conqueror in his narrative, loudly calling upon the Academy to throw open its doors to that immortal genius. Doubtless M. Dumas would gratefully have appreciated this delicate compliment, meant for his eye alone; but alas! he never saw it till it had been read over half the town as his own opinion of his own worth,—a circumstance deeply mortifying to his sensitive spirit. Had he ex-

exercised but a grain of that discretion common to inferior capacities, and hesitated to impose upon the public as his own a story which was not only not his own, but of the very details of which he was totally ignorant, this calamity would never have befallen him. Into what embarrassments will not the eccentricities of genius sometimes lead its gifted possessors!

There is a similar story about "Les Trois Mousquetaires," in which M. Maquet, to convince a party of friends that his *chef* was accustomed to adopt, without a pen's stroke of correction, the compositions of his subaltern, inserted the most awkward paragraph perhaps in the French tongue. In the space of five lines he contrived to repeat the word *que* no less than sixteen times, and was so rash as to wager that not a single *que* would be found expunged when the copy was sent to the printer. How many does the reader suppose Dumas suffered to remain? Five, — ten, — fifteen? The precise number of sixteen were all that escaped the *conqueror's* critical pen. We have given this story as we find it.

"Amaury" was followed by "Cecile," and by a couple of other novels, which we have no reason to suppose not written by M. Dumas. Then came the famous "Count of Montechristo," in eighteen volumes, octavo, the first part of which was written by the same Fiorentino who had expressed such delight at the meeting of Dumas and Ugo Foscolo, and the second by M. Maquet. As a matter of historical interest, we may mention that, in two of its episodes, the facts, very much as they are told in the novel, are to be found in Peuchet's "Memoirs extracted from the Archives of the Parisian Police" (Paris, 1837-8). A novel of Arnould's, called "The Wheel of Fortune," is also liberally drawn upon in the narrative of Morel's career. Whether the rumors were correct which whispered that the rest of Montechristo was translated from some German novel or other, we do not possess the means of deciding, not being very well versed in the yearly efflux of the Leipzig fair. But so long as it was not written by Dumas himself, it matters little to us whether he *conquered* it at first or second hand, whether it came to his

arms a virgin bride, or a captive dragged from the distant shores of the Elbe or the Weser.

"Fernande" (Paris, 1844, 3 vols., octavo), by Hyppolite Auger; "Une Fille du Régent" (Paris, 1845, 4 vols., octavo), by M. Couaillhac; "La Reine Margot" (Paris, 1845, 6 vols., octavo), of which Maquet is suspected of being at least in part the author,—all appeared under the sole name of M. Alexandre Dumas. "La Guerre des Femmes," as it was called in "La Presse," has since been published in the form of four distinct novels,—“Ninon de Lartigues,” “Madame de Condé,” “La Vicomtesse de Cambes,” and “L’Abbaye de Peyssac,”—eight volumes in all, most of which have, we fancy, been circulated in cheap translations through America. “The Corsican Brothers” (Paris, 1845, 2 vols., octavo) is a clever story: “The Memoirs of a Physician” promised to be an endless one; but we believe that, instead of the eighty volumes threatened in the prospectus, it hardly exceeded a dozen. We have not had the curiosity to inquire into its fate. “Le Chevalier de la Maison Rouge” and “La Dame de Monsoreau” are two not unfair specimens (in fourteen volumes) of the better order of the author’s abilities. The appearance of the last-named work, however, caused its writer a great deal of unmerited vexation and trouble. As he was justified in doing by contemporary writers, he had painted François d’Espinay Saint-Luc, one of the courtiers of Henry III., in no very flattering colors. His descendant, the Marquis d’Espinay Saint-Luc, indignant at the contemptible figure in which his ancestor was represented, appealed to the courts of law for redress; but the pages of history were found abundantly to sustain M. Dumas’s view of the *mignon* of 1577, and the Marquis lost his case.

“Le Batard de Mauléon” (Paris, 1846) was composed with the aid of M. Maquet: “Les deux Diane” (Paris, 1846) also owes a great part of its origin to other hands than those of Dumas. “Les Aventures de Quatre Femmes et d’un Perroquet” was the cause or the effect of a lawsuit between Dumas and some newspapers, on which our space will not permit us to dwell. Our paper has already grown under our hands to an extent we were far from foreseeing when we began, and our theme is still unexhausted. A long series of

novels, travels, histories, and miscellanies commend themselves to our friendly notice, and some of them have made in their day such a noise in the world, that we do not see how we can possibly pass them over here. There is no field of letters in which this enterprising artist has not ploughed; and from many he has raised the most astounding harvests. The histories of several regiments of the French army, written by his secretary, but published in his own name, under the patronage of the Duke of Orleans, are an amusing illustration of one man's sowing and another's reaping. His journey to Spain in the suite of the Duke of Montpensier, and his presence as a friend at the marriage of that prince, served to fill to the brim the cup of his glory. On his return from a visit to Africa (he crossed from Cadiz to Algiers in a government steamer), the public heard of nothing else but the wonders that this new conqueror had seen, the miracles he had performed. Hunting lions, visiting Arab chiefs, receiving on board the steamer a troop of unfortunate Frenchmen,—every thing that occurred in his travels was immeasurably different from the experiences of common men,—every thing had combined to do him honor. The upshot of the whole matter was, that, by exalting himself above the level of his brother authors, he provoked the indignation of the *genus irritabile* to a sufficient extent, not only to cause the production of squibs and satires of a day against him, but to lead the attention of the public to the innumerable plagiarisms and conquests referred to in this paper.

Many of the miscellaneous works of our author, including under this title the multitude of articles other than dramatic or fictitious, are possessed of a good deal of merit of one kind or another. Wherever patient research, analytical investigation, profound reflection, betrays itself in a passage, we may indeed be tolerably sure that he is not its writer. But for many exceedingly vivid sketches, more remarkable for stage effect than for an air of probability, for hastiness of execution than for accuracy of detail, for tasteful combination than for originality of conception, Dumas is entitled to ample credit. That he is not altogether fitted to shine as an historian, may well be inferred; how is it, then, that by his admirers —

and not unfrequently by men of good judgment — he is placed in the same rank with Chateaubriand and with Thierry? We can answer this question but in part. That some portions of his historical compositions should be esteemed as equal, if not superior, to the style of these great men, is a mere matter of taste; one critic thinks in one way, his neighbor in another. But that there are many passages in some of his volumes fully equal to corresponding passages in the works of his rivals, the incredulous may be convinced by the most cursory examination. It is a self-evident proposition, that Thierry is equal to Thierry, that Chateaubriand is equal to Chateaubriand, — that there can be no comparison instituted between a passage in a book of Dumas and a passage precisely identical in another book. Only, M. Dumas cannot be allowed any other praise than that of a faithful copyist, — than that of introducing to the admiration of the public the hidden beauties of those two obscure and unknown authors. For it is in vain to say, with the ingenious Mr. Puff, that “two people happened to hit on the same thought, — and Shakespeare made use of it first, that’s all.”

Let us turn to “*Gaule et France*” (Paris, 1833; or, better still, a later edition with notes, &c., Paris, 1842), one of the most admired historical productions of Monsieur Dumas. We are told by M. Granier de Cassagnac that no less than four hundred pages of this book perfectly correspond to the same amount of matter in Chateaubriand and Thierry. This is a severe charge against a disciple of the first-born of the Muses; let us see how he substantiates it. Is or is not the resemblance between the following parallel passages sufficiently close to warrant the charge of — conquest — against the Marquis de la Pailleterie? We think that it is. The opposing citations are taken from the “*Études Historiques*” of Chateaubriand and the “*Lettres sur l’Histoire de France*” of Thierry.

Chateaubriand.

“Ils abordaient les uns à pied, les autres à cheval ou en chariots, les autres traînés par des cerfs, ceux-ci portés sur des cha-

Dumas.

“Voici les Barbares les uns à pied, les autres à cheval, ceux-ci sur des chameaux, ceux-là sur des chars traînés par des cerfs;

meaux, ceux-là flottant sur des boucliers ou sur des barques." (p. 158.) "Les Barbares parcourent les provinces, chassent devant eux, comme un troupeau, sénateurs." (p. 177.)

"Les maisons de Carthage étaient des lieux de prostitution. Des hommes erraient dans les rues, couronnés de fleurs, habillés comme des femmes, la tête voilée." (p. 174.)

"Genserik arrive : au dehors, le fracas des armes, au dedans le bruit des jeux ; la voix des mourants, la voix d'une populace ivre se confondent." (*ibid.*)

"Alaric ne survécut que peu. . . . Les Goths détournèrent les eaux du Busentum ; ils creusèrent une fosse au milieu de son lit desséché, et ils y déposèrent le corps de leur chef avec une grande quantité d'argent et d'étoffes précieuses ; puis ils remirent le Busentum dans son lit, et un courant rapide passa sur le tombeau. Les esclaves employés à cet ouvrage furent égorgés." (p. 165.)

"Attila, expiré sur le sein d'une femme, est exposé. . . . Les Huns se decoupent les joues pour pleurer Attila, non avec des larmes de femmes, mais avec du sang d'homme. Des cavaliers tournent autour du catafalque en chantant les louanges du héros. . . . Le cadavre est confié à la terre, . . . enfermé en un triple cercueil d'or, d'argent

les fleuves les charriaient sur leurs boucliers, la mer les apporte sur des barques. . . . Ils vont chasser devant eux les populations, comme les bergers les troupeaux." (p. 7.)

"Genserik marche vers Carthage la prostituée, où les hommes se couronnent de fleurs, s'habillent comme des femmes, et, la tête voilée." (p. 9.)

"Il arrive ; au dehors, le fracas des armes, au dedans, le bruit des jeux, ici, la voix des chanteurs, là bas, les cris des mourants." (*ibid.*)

"Alaric meurt. . . . Ses soldats détournent le cours du Busento font creuser une fosse pour leur chef. . . . au milieu de son lit desséché, y jettent sur lui de l'or des étoffes précieuses ; puis ils ramènent les eaux du Busento dans leur lit ; le fleuve passe sur le tombeau ils égorgent jusqu'au dernier des esclaves employés à l'œuvre funéraire." (p. 12.)

"Attila expire dans les bras de sa nouvelle épouse et les Huns se font des incisions au dessous des yeux, afin de ne point pleurer leur roi avec des larmes de femmes, mais avec le sang d'homme. L'élite de ses cavaliers tourne autour de son corps, en chantant des chants guerriers le cadavre, enfermé dans trois cer-

et de fer. On met sur le cercueil des armes enlevées des carquois enrichis de pierreries et des drapeaux. Pour dérober à jamais la connaissance de ces richesses, les ensevelisseurs sont jetés avec l'enseveli." (p. 166.)

cueils, le premier d'or, le second d'argent, le troisième de fer, est déposé sur un lit des drapeaux, d'armes et de pierreries; et afin que nulle cupidité humaine ne vienne profaner tant de richesses funéraires, les ensevelisseurs sont poussés dans le fosse avec l'enseveli." (p. 13.)

Thierry.

"Le roi jugea prudent d'aller passer la nuit dans le palais épiscopal; le lendemain, au point du jour, il quitta la ville avec ses gens." (p. 388.)

"L'un des conjurés, croyant le moment favorable pour commettre le meurtre, sortit de dessous une espèce de voûte sombre, en criant à haute voix: Commune! commune!" (p. 288.)

Dumas.

"Le roi n'osa, cette nuit-là, coucher ailleurs que dans le palais épiscopal; et, le lendemain, au point du jour, il quitta la ville avec sa suite." (p. 220.)

"L'un des conjurés, s'imaginant que l'heure était venue d'exécuter le meurtre, sortit d'une voûte sombre et basse, et se mit à crier à haute voix: Commune! commune!" (p. 222.)

We had marked several other passages for quotation, but our limits warn us that we must speedily draw to a close. We have no longer either space to indulge in exhibitions of the manner in which this modern Alexander of letters waves his golden sceptre over the many fair provinces that belong not to him, and annexes their revenues to his own treasury, or to deduce reflections from such acts of genius. That M. Dumas has been a successful author, in one sense of the word, we cannot deny. That his publications must have been a source of enormous emolument to him, is a fact plain to the meanest understanding. The demand for them has been unceasing, and almost unbounded. We have seen a brief calculation of the publication prices of the works which had appeared six years ago, and the estimate showed, that to any one who had, as each of his books came out, bought and paid for a copy, the cost of the whole would amount to the neat little sum of sixteen hundred and eighty-seven francs, or nearly

three hundred and forty dollars! And since that time we presume that he has written a thousand or fifteen hundred francs' worth more. There was no exaggeration in the advertisement of the editors of the collected edition of his works, when they said, in relation to the diversity of subjects and the number of volumes that had already borne his name, that the drama, which for any other writer would have constituted an entire existence, was but as a prelude to Alexandre Dumas. His productions, continue the enthusiastic biblioplists, "already popular in their renown, shall become so in their price. Every cottage shall have a shelf for the select beauties of Dumas, every chateau shall have a *corps de bibliothèque*. For Dumas is young, Dumas is in the full vigor of health, and his genius, *que féconde sans cesse l'imprévu, est chaque année gros de quarante volumes!* Therefore those who love him not, admire him. But all the world loves him!"

There remained, we believe, but two branches of literature for this indefatigable mind to attempt; the one was to write a volume of sermons; the other, to edit a newspaper. The last achievement is no longer left doubtful. Several weeks since, we received the prospectus of "*Le Mousquetaire*," a daily paper, to be published at Paris, "*propriétaire, rédacteur en chef, Alexandre Dumas*"; and furthermore bearing this singular monition to all concerned: "*Le journal ne reçoit pas de réclames des théâtres ni des libraires. Il paye ses loges et il achète ses livres.*"

It must not be supposed that the charges which we have repeated against M. Dumas have passed uncontradicted; but though denied, they have not been refuted. In the exercise of our judgment, we have endeavored to sift the truth from the conflicting statements on either side, and have not hesitated to expose what we believe the real state of the case. At the same time, we have not scrupled to produce specimens of the nature and style of the evidence adduced, sufficient to enable our readers to say for themselves what weight it merits. Some of the authors accused of writing the novels of Dumas deny the charge; some do not; we have given, in either case, the verdict of our conviction to the side which seemed most likely to be correct.

In conclusion, we cannot but express our sincere regret that a man of such brilliant parts (albeit none of the most solid) as M. Dumas, should have fallen into the misfortune of so constantly thinking the same thoughts, and expressing them in the same language, with other and earlier men, less gifted doubtless, but more original. As to the books purchased by him in their unpublished state, they may perhaps be considered by himself and his booksellers as thoroughly and perfectly his own,—selected with his perspicacity, paid for with his money,—and therefore subject entirely to his control. And being his, what is there to prevent his writing his name upon the title-page? But the unfortunate Thierry and Chateaubriand, what is to be done with them? They are not in the market; Chateaubriand is not even in the world; the passages kidnapped from them are wrongfully held captive among strangers; how shall M. Dumas reconcile it to his conscience to send his body's guest into that spiritual world where it will be inevitably encountered by the angry ghosts of the plundered victims? With what energy will the offended birds attack the popinjay, radiant in borrowed plumes, when he obtrudes himself upon their society! Here, a feather will be plucked away by Schiller; there, a waving plume by Corneille; on the one hand, Lope de Vega is again restored to his own; on the other, Chateaubriand wrests away a perfect shower of downy plumage; till at last the bird that entered such a magnificent peacock will be contumeliously driven away, a very bare, beggarly, miserable little daw!

After all, M. Dumas is not the first man who has suffered from coming a little too late into this world. The celebrated Donatus, the instructor of St. Jerome, long, long ago,—ages before Thierry wrote or other people “conquered,”—found the same cause of complaint. But it may be pardoned him, in the then crude condition of the literary world, that he never thought of “seizing his own” wherever he found it, but contented himself with merely anathematizing his predecessors. “*Pereant*,” he devoutly exclaims,—“*pereant illi qui ante nos nostra dixerunt!*” “Let them be held accursed and cast out, who have said our good things before us!” The holy father lacked the philosophy of the moderns: we would commend,

rather than his unsparing anathemas, the more self-satisfied spirit of the Chevalier d'Aceilly, to all those who find themselves cruelly anticipated in the brightest moments of inspiration by some nobody of yesterday. Two hundred years ago, the accomplished chevalier, being reproached with the inroads he had made upon the works of the ancients, replied in this pleasant epigram: and we cordially commend its philosophy to all his successors:—

“ Dis-je quelque chose assez-belle ?
L'antiquité tout en cervelle
Pretend l'avoir dite avant moi !
C'est une plaisante donzelle !
Que ne-venait elle apres moi ;
J'aurais dit la chose avant elle ! ”

ART. IV. — *History of Liberty.* Part II. *The Early Christians.* By SAMUEL ELIOT. Boston: Little, Brown, & Co. 1853. 2 vols. 12mo. pp. xxii., 413; xxiv., 431.

THE metaphors that enter so constantly into colloquial intercourse as to be shunned for their triteness by fastidious rhetoricians, are always founded on close and obvious analogies. This is eminently the case with terms derived from the pictorial art, as applied to history. All history is painting. Lowest in the scale of art and in the capacity of instruction we must place the mere annals of a state or of the race, whether in the dry details of the avowed annalist, or in the smoother paragraphs of the historian who plumes himself on entire freedom from passion and prepossession. Such a narrative is like the painting on a Chinese teacup, in which we can trace distinct outlines of the several objects, but can form no conceptions of their relative magnitudes and distances. As the features of a landscape group themselves on the canvas with some semblance to reality only when a single perspective focus is assumed, so can verisimilitude be given to the historian's narrative only when he has a fixed point of view, a definite theory of national development or decline, of